

May 6, 1999

Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

7579 '99 MAY 10 P2:40

RE: DOCKET #98N-1038 IRRADIATION IN THE PRODUCTION, PROCESSING AND HANDLING OF FOOD

Dear Readers,

I write to urge the FDA to require labeling on all foods that have been treated with radiation/irradiation. Because this technology is new, and by its nature, causes chemical changes, the fact that food has been treated with radiation should be disclosed to the customer.

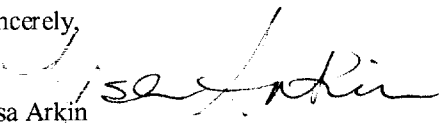
I am a parent - which means it is my responsibility to feed my family. When I shop at the grocery store I want to know the truth about a product so that I be a "smart" buyer. For example, if a food is altered to be 'low fat' I need to know that. The reason I need that information is, my husband and I may want to eat low fat, but I may not want to serve that food to my children who need a certain amount of fat in their diet. Food labels provide information for the health of the consumer. Parents must know ingredients and processing of foods because many children, such as mine, have food allergies. IT IS PARTICULARLY CRUCIAL THAT PARENTS HAVE FULL INFORMATION ABOUT FOODS THEY PURCHASE FOR THEIR CHILDREN.

In turn, the FDA is responsible for making it possible for parents to be informed about the food they purchase for their families. Parents are expecting the FDA to continue labeling irradiated foods.

Radiation is a material fact of food processing. The requirement for disclosing such information should be retained. The requirement for labeling food that has been irradiated, or has ingredients that have been so treated should not expire at any time in the future.

The labeling should be on the front of the package. If the food is not packaged, such as would be the case with produce, the label should be displayed on a sign in close proximity to that food.

Sincerely,


Lisa Arkin
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